

VZCZCXYZ0003
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHEG #1372 1970827
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 160827Z JUL 09
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3207
INFO RUEAHL/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS CAIRO 001372

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EWWT](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MCAP](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: U.S. COAST GUARD VISITS PORT OF ALEXANDRIA

1. (SBU) KEY POINTS

--A U.S. Coast Guard International Port Security team (PST) visited Egypt June 19-26 to conduct its first ever assessment of Egypt's compliance with the International Ship and Port Security standards code (ISPS). The team met with GOE port security officials and assessed the GOE's ISPS implementation at the Port of Alexandria.
--The PST determined that the GOE has put in place a Port Security policy that appears to correspond to the ISPS code. However, during this visit the team was unable to sufficiently view and assess the ISPS code's implementation at working levels at the port facility. The team will report its official findings later this year.
--The PST extended an invitation for the GOE to conduct a reciprocal visit to a U.S. port in the near future.

VISIT TO PORT OF ALEXANDRIA

2. (SBU) The PST and Econoff met June 22 and 23 with Rear Admiral Tawfic Abd El-Hamid Abou-Gendia, head of the Maritime Transport Sector and Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, to discuss the GOE's implementation of the ISPS code. According to Tawfic, there are 67 port facilities in Egypt that are required to implement the ISPS requirements. Of these facilities, there are ports for general commercial use and specialized ports that handle oil, gas, and hazardous materials. Tawfic noted that Egypt's ports process approximately 20,000 voyages per year. Tawfic also said that over 60% of all trade in Egypt goes through the Port of Alexandria.

3. (SBU) As part of the efforts to further implement the ISPS code, the GOE in 2004 implemented security upgrades at the Port of Alexandria. The upgrades include expanding port entry to four main gates, each with direct highway access. Special taxis are used to shuttle port employees to and from the port facilities. Telecommuting has recently been used to reduce the number of people entering the port each day. Tourist boats and cruise liners are escorted into the port by armed patrol boats, and the cruise terminals are closed unless a ship is at port. While in port, each ship is guarded by an armed police officer. All of Egypt's port security officials must undergo ISPS Code training at the Egyptian Regional Maritime Security Institute.

4. (SBU) The GOE escorted the PST and Econoff around the Port and showed the team the newly constructed commercial wing, the port's security control rooms, IT facilities, and cargo terminals. The port is monitored by an extensive network of closed-circuit cameras that cover practically every corner of the port, including the roads outside the facility. Entry onto the port is restricted to port employees (who must display proper identification at all times) and all vehicles are extensively searched by explosive and illegal drug detecting canines and electronic detecting devices. Cruise passengers enter through the port's commercial entrance and are searched and screened for security, then shuttled to the cruise terminal in a bus. The port is guarded by specially trained port security personnel who complete a three month training program prior to deployment at Egyptian ports. The

port also has a special response force to respond to security threats and in-house fire and emergency response teams trained to handle basic emergency response as well as hazardous material cleanup. The port's waters are patrolled twenty-four hours per day.

NEXT STEPS

15. (SBU) The PST extended an invitation to the GOE to conduct a reciprocal port visit in the near future. The GOE agreed in principle and asked the PST to submit a formal invitation to the Ministry of Defense. The PST team noted that they were satisfied with the overall outcome of the visit and believe that this visit likely paved the way for future Coast Guard visits to Egyptian ports. The team did not have sufficient time or access to examine how the ISPS code is being implemented at the working levels of the port facilities, but it appears that Egypt's port security policy conforms with the ISPS code. The PST said that they hope the next visit will include an expansion of the visit to Port Said as well as a more detailed examination of the working level ISPS implementation at the Port of Alexandria.
SCOBey